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13 February 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Subject: Meeting of SAMACC Subcommittee  
on Psychological Warfare

1. SAMACC Subcommittee on Psychological Warfare met at 9:30 a.m. today, Friday, 13 February 1948, in room 2003, New State Department Building. Mr. Ralph Block (State) acted as chairman. Members present were:

Colonel W. L. Hollman (Army)  
Colonel A. H. Rich (Air Force)  
Captain K. F. Pechmann (Navy)  
Commander Knell (Navy)

and, in accordance with your direction, relayed to me through Mr. Hill. I represented CIA. Illness prevented [redacted] from attending.

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2. Document M4/6, making certain recommendations regarding the type of psychological warfare organization to be brought into existence in time of war or threat toward war, was approved a short time ago by SAMACC. The problem now before this Subcommittee is to enumerate in detail the various echelons of the organization and spell out the functions of all the staff and line activities.

3. Before getting into an analysis of organization functions, Mr. Block spoke about his efforts to develop lists of personnel in the files of the Personnel Division of the Office of Foreign Service with the objective of having such people available for a war-time psychological warfare organization. Captain Pechmann (Navy) made supplementary remarks on the subject indicating some of the difficulties that would be encountered in attempting to ascertain with accuracy what was done by individuals in time of war. Because of security restrictions, the files are not always too helpful.

4. At this juncture Mr. Block recommended that the members of the Subcommittee obtain and read the Smith-Mundt Bill which gives stability to the Office of Information and educational exchange of the Department of State.

5. A discussion followed as to how seriously the National Security Organization would support training programs in peace time. Captain Pechmann offered certain examples of some training methods, e.g., lectures and appropriate films.

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6. At this stage of the meeting, I asked Mr. Black two questions:

a. Whether the organization contemplated in Document XII/L was geared only for time of war or threat of war. His answer was "yes".

b. Are we today in a period which is in the category of "threat of war"? His answer was "no".

Following these answers by Mr. Black, Captain Pechmann went on to explain what happened in the field of psychological warfare during the first years of World War II. He and Mr. Black differed as to when psychological warfare was first formally tied in with military plans and operations, and they were also at variance as to whether greater emphasis was given to the use of psychological warfare methods in the Pacific or in Europe.

7. Then began the discussion of a proposed organization chart for the psychological warfare organization. Roughly, the organization contemplated on a world-wide basis numbers more than 20,000 personnel, under a director who reports to the National Security Council. During today's meeting no mention was made of a small organization utilizing the resources of existing departments and agencies. Captain Pechmann was in constant conflict with the chairman and with other members of the Subcommittee as to his ideas of the functions within the organization, and for quite a while with chalk in hand and by depicting of various diagrams on the blackboard, his viewpoints were given by him in domineering manner as if they were the solution to all problems. However, his fellow Navy member, Commander Knoll differed with Captain Pechmann on the question of a policy and planning organization within the proposed psychological warfare agency. From here the discussion became theoretical, complicated, repetitious, and after two full hours of wrangling, was ended only by some sharp observations made by Colonel Rich (Air Force).

8. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 when the Chairman announced that arrangements were almost completed for permanent headquarters to house the Subcommittee and that, in the meantime, three meetings were scheduled for next week -- on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

9. This work on the Psychological Warfare Subcommittee of SARACC is apparently a full time operation for each of the Subcommittee members, and it is apparent that if they continue to operate along the lines of the meeting conducted today, it will take quite a while to plot the large organization they have in mind and then enumerate in detail all the functions.

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10. This is a working subcommittee and it is not only helpful but essential that CIA know what they are doing. It is questionable, however, whether the CIA representative should find it necessary to attend every meeting since his occasional presence should be sufficient to inject the CIA viewpoint and to bring back with him knowledge of what is being done by the Subcommittee.

11. At your convenience, I would be very glad to discuss this matter orally with you.

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